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NON-FATAL, ZFF MESSAGE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT REQUIRED
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FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC
RHMFIS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
RUEHAA/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 DUSHANBE 000870

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STATE FOR P, SCA/FO, SCA/CEN, EUR/FO, EUR/RUS, INL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 5/11/2031
TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR SNAR RS TI

SUBJECT: URGENT REQUEST FOR DEMARCHE ON SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN
COUNTER-NARCOTICS AND SECURITY CONFERENCE

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CLASSIFIED BY: RICHARD E. HOAGLAND, AMBASSADOR, EXEC, EMBASSY
DUSHANBE.

REASON: 1.4 (B), (D)

¶1. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. SEE PARA NINE BELOW.

¶2. (S) ON MAY 11 AT 1800 LOCAL, GENERAL-COLONEL SAIDIMIR
ZUHUROV, CHAIRMAN OF THE TAJIK STATE BORDER COMMITTEE, CALLED
THE U.S. DEFENSE ATTACHE AND REQUESTED AN URGENT MEETING.
GENERAL ZUHUROV TOLD THE DATT HE HAD A SERIOUS INTERNATIONAL
ISSUE THAT HE WANTED THE DATT TO PASS TO THE U.S. AMBASSADOR
IMMEDIATELY. ZUHUROV SAID ON MAY 6 OR 7 RUSSIAN FOREIGN
MINISTER SERGEY LAVROV HAD CALLED IN THE AMBASSADORS OF
KYRGYZSTAN, KAZAKHSTAN, UZBEKISTAN, AND TURKMENISTAN, AND TOLD
THEM TO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AND GEORGE
¶C. MARSHALL CENTER SPONSORED CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIAN
COUNTER-NARCOTICS AND SECURITY CONFERENCE SET FOR MAY 15-17 IN
DUSHANBE. LAVROV REPORTEDLY ACCUSED THE UNITED STATES AND
TAJIKISTAN OF PUSHING THIS CONFERENCE TO SUPPORT U.S. GOALS, AND
CAUTIONED THE COUNTRIES TO NOT PARTICIPATE. ALL FOUR COUNTRIES
ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE AS CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP, IN
ADDITION TO RUSSIA, AFGHANISTAN, AND PAKISTAN. INDIA, CHINA,
AND TURKEY ARE INVITED AS OBSERVER NATIONS.

¶3. (S) GENERAL ZUHUROV STATED TAJIK PRESIDENT RAHMONOV

EXPRESSED ANGER AT THE RUSSIAN MOVE, AND THE TAJIK MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAD COMPLAINED TO THE RUSSIANS. ZUHUROV ADDED PRESIDENT RAHMONOV CONTINUED TO EXPRESS HIS STRONG SUPPORT FOR STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, WHILE TAJIK RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA ARE WEAKENING. ZUHUROV SAID ALL TAJIK MINISTERS EXPRESSED THEIR STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE CONFERENCE.

¶4. (S) ZUHUROV REITERATED THAT THE RUSSIANS CONTINUE TO TRY TO MAKE TAJIKISTAN APPEAR WEAK AND UNABLE TO PROTECT ITS BORDERS. HE STATED THAT HE IS A GENERAL, NOT A POLITICAL FIGURE, AND DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE RUSSIANS WERE AGAINST A CONFERENCE ON COUNTER-NARCOTICS, WHICH IS MANIFESTLY IN THEIR INTERESTS. HE SAID NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING THREATENS ALL COUNTRIES IN THE REGION AND IS ONE ISSUE ALL COUNTRIES CAN AGREE ON, INCLUDING RUSSIA AND UZBEKISTAN. HE NOTED THE CONFERENCE IS BRINGING IN VERY HIGH-LEVEL PARTICIPANTS, TO INCLUDE THE PRESIDENT OF TAJIKISTAN'S PERSONAL PARTICIPATION.

¶5. (S) ZUHUROV SAID THE CHINESE EMBASSY HAD INFORMED THE TAJIK MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS THEY PLANNED TO NOT ATTEND. HE SAID HE HOPED THE UNITED STATES COULD STILL PERSUADE THE CHINESE TO PARTICIPATE. ZUHUROV, THEN USING A SLAPPING GESTURE, SAID CHINESE PARTICIPATION WOULD BE A SLAP IN THE RUSSIAN FACE. THE DATT COMMENTED THAT HE COULD POSSIBLY ARRANGE A MEETING WITH THE CHINESE EMBASSY. ZUHUROV TOLD HIS CHIEF OF FOREIGN RELATIONS TO BE PREPARED TO MEET WITH THE DATT AND THE CHINESE EARLY ON MAY ¶12.

¶6. (S) ZUHUROV SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THE UZBEKS AND TURKMEN HAD ALREADY DECIDED NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONFERENCE, GIVEN THEY HAD PARTICIPATED IN THE FIRST CONFERENCE IN GARMISCH IN NOVEMBER 2005. ZUHUROV ASKED THE UNITED STATES TO CONFIRM KYRGYZ AND KAZAKH PARTICIPATION.

¶7. (S) ZUHUROV AGAIN REQUESTED THE DATT TO PASS THIS INFORMATION TO THE AMBASSADOR QUICKLY. HE REITERATED PRESIDENT RAHMONOV'S STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THE CONFERENCE. HE EMPHASIZED PRESIDENT RAHMONOV WAS PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN ENSURING EACH PART OF THE CONFERENCE IS A STRONG SUCCESS.

¶8. (S) CONFERENCE BACKGROUND. THE CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIAN COUNTER-NARCOTICS AND SECURITY WORKING GROUP AND CONFERENCE IN DUSHANBE FOLLOWS THE INITIAL CONFERENCE HELD AT THE GEORGE C. MARSHALL CENTER IN GARMISCH, GERMANY, NOVEMBER 2005. THE UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND AND THE GEORGE C. MARSHAL CENTER ARE

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CO-HOSTING THE DUSHANBE CONFERENCE. THE FOCUS OF THE CONFERENCE IS TO IMPROVE - VIA REGIONAL COOPERATION - EFFORTS TO CURB OPIUM CULTIVATION, PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS, AND THE INTERDICTION OF NARCOTICS IN THE REGION. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE ARE TO PRESENT A MODEL FOR CONDUCTING FUTURE BUSINESS MEETINGS, DEVELOP A DATABASE PARTICIPATING NATIONS CAN SHARE, AND CREATE A TWO-YEAR SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS. DURING THE INAUGURAL MEETING LAST NOVEMBER, THE PARTICIPATING NATIONS - THE UNITED STATES, U.K., AFGHANISTAN, TAJIKISTAN, PAKISTAN, TURKMENISTAN, UZBEKISTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, AND KAZAKHSTAN - HAD AGREED TO HOLD THE SECOND CONFERENCE IN DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN THIS MAY. THE PARTICIPANTS ALSO RECOMMENDED RUSSIA PARTICIPATE AS A CHARTER NATION, DESPITE RUSSIA'S PREVIOUS REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE. SINCE THE WEEK FOLLOWING THE FIRST MEETING IN NOVEMBER, EMBASSY DUSHANBE HAS ENGAGED THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY ON THE UPCOMING MAY CONFERENCE. EMBASSY DISCUSSED AGAIN LAST WEEK WITH THE RUSSIAN DEFENSE ATTACHE AND RUSSIAN DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION THE OPPORTUNITIES THE CONFERENCE PROVIDED FOR ALL REGIONAL PARTICIPANTS. BOTH EXPRESSED THAT PARTICIPATION WAS AN ISSUE THE RUSSIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WAS HANDLING, AND THE EMBASSY IN DUSHANBE HAD LITTLE INPUT. OF NOTE, THE RUSSIAN BORDER GUARD LEADERSHIP IN TAJIKISTAN HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING.

¶9. COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST: GENERAL ZUHUROV IS ONE OF THE STRAIGHTEST SHOOTERS IN TAJIKISTAN. WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO REASON TO BELIEVE HE IS PLAYING SOME SORT OF ZERO-SUM GAME WITH THIS INFORMATION. EMBASSY DUSHANBE REQUESTS THE DEPARTMENT

PREPARE AN URGENT DEMARCHE TO BE DELIVERED, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, ON MAY 12 IN THE PARTICIPATING STATES' CAPITALS, URGING THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DUSHANBE CONFERENCE BECAUSE IT IS IN THEIR OWN AND THE GREATER REGION'S INTERESTS. END COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST.

HOAGLAND